

PROCEEDINGS

of a

MILITARY COURT FOR THE
TRIAL OF WAR CRIMINALS

held at

LUNEBURG, GERMANY,

on

MONDAY, 24 SEPTEMBER, 1945,

upon the trial of

JOSEF KRAMER

and

44 Others.

SEVENTH DAY.

Transcript of the Official
Shorthand Notes.

(At 1000 hours the Court reassembles pursuant to adjournment, the same President, Members, and Judge Advocate being present)

SOPHIA LITWINSKA is called in and having been duly sworn is examined by OCL. BACKHOUSE as follows:-

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: Is the oath you have taken binding upon your conscience ?
A. Yes.

OCL. BACKHOUSE: What is your full name ? A. Sophia Litwinski.

Q Is your home address 13A, Bahnhofstrasse, Lublin ? A. Yes.

Q How old are you ? A. 29.

Q Were you arrested in Lublin ? A. Yes.

Q When was that ? A. 19th May 1940.

Q Why were you arrested ? A. Because I am a Jewess.

Q Did you ever receive any form of trial ? A. No.

Q Was your husband a Jew ? A. No.

Q I think you were first kept at Lublin for a year and then did you go to Auschwitz ? A. Yes.

Q What year did you arrive at Auschwitz ? A. 1941.

Q What part of the year ? A. In the beginning of autumn.

Q Was your husband also arrested ? A. Yes.

Q What was he arrested for ? A. He was in the Polish army, a full lieutenant.

Q Why was he arrested ? A. He joined as a volunteer in the Polish army as a legionnaire; that was the reason why he with others was arrested.

Q Where was he taken to ? A. For a while he was in prison and then later on he was taken to Auschwitz.

Q Did he die at Auschwitz ? A. Died ? We all died at Auschwitz.

Q When you arrived at Auschwitz how many people were there in the transport that arrived with you ? A. I cannot say exactly, but there might have been a thousand or fifteen hundred men and women.

Q When you arrived there what was the first thing that happened to you ?
A. When we arrived at the station we were surrounded immediately by S.S. men who started to hit us, then we were lined up in fives and marched to the camp.

Q What happened when you arrived at the camp ? A. When we arrived all our personal belongings were taken away. We had to leave all our clothes behind, and we were taken in a shower bath. Even the bread which we brought with us was taken away from us.

Q Did you ask for clothes ? A. Yes, as my hair was cut very short I asked for a cloth to put round my head because I was freezing, then a Cape who was in charge of the shower bath started to hit us very severely.

- Q Were you given prison clothes ? A. We got a shirt which was full of lice. We did not get any sort of underclothing, only a long sort of coat and then a silk blouse without any sleeves.
- Q Was a number then tattooed on your arm ? A. Yes, that was done already previously in a small sort of hut where we were herded.
- Q Were you then taken to a block ? A. For a whole day we were left naked in that sort of shower bath. Then at last we got some sort of clothing and afterwards we were led in block number 25.
- Q What were the sleeping facilities in block 25 ? A. There were sort of cages in three parts in this block number 25. Very often we slept seven or eight in one part of this cage and we got blankets, one sometimes for seven or eight. I will correct that statement. One blanket was issued for seven or ten persons, not for each person.
- Q Had you any mattresses or straw to sleep on ? A. No, in number 25 we had no mattresses or palliases.
- Q What time did you have to get up the following morning ? A. At three o'clock.
- Q Was that the regular time for getting up at Auschwitz whilst you were there ? A. Yes, at three or three-thirty a.m. in the beginning; that was the normal time to get up.
- Q What happened when you got up in the morning ? A. Everybody had to leave the block and it was a sort of roll call for counting purposes.
- Q How long did the roll call last ? A. Sometimes it lasted until eight or nine o'clock in the morning.
- Q During that roll call what did you have to do ? A. Stand to attention in line of five.
- Q What happened if you moved ? A. You were hit in the face or had to kneel down holding in your arms a heavy stone.
- Q How long were you kept kneeling like that ? A. That depended upon the whim of the blockaltester.
- Q What employment were you given ? A. For the first six weeks we did not work at all. We were in a sort of quarantine - a sort of reception block.
- Q During that time did you injure yourself ? A. When I was fetching food, these containers were very heavy and one day when it was raining badly the mud in the camp was so bad that with my big wooden clogs which I had to wear I could not move my feet, and I fell down and broke my leg.
- Q Were you taken to hospital ? A. Yes, to the camp reception station.
- Q Were you in hospital at Christmas of 1941 ? A. Yes.
- Q Do you remember the day before Christmas Day ? A. Yes.
- Q What happened on that day ? A. There was a big selection on that day.
- Q Where did that selection take place ? A. In block number 4, the hospital block. This selection took place in the whole hospital, I, myself, was in number 4.
- Q How many thousand women were there on the whole selection ? A. Over 3,000 women.

Q How many women had to parade ? A. I do not know the exact number, but all of them had to appear on that parade but only Jewsesses.

Q Who was in charge of the parade ?

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: To what is this evidence directed, Colonel Backhouse ?

COL. BACKHOUSE: This evidence is directed to the fact that she was selected for a gas chamber by one of the accused whom she is pointing out.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: Are we not dealing with December 1944 ?

COL. BACKHOUSE: Yes, but you will realise I hope that she has changed the year she went in and also this particular year. In other words, the first year after she went in. She got the date wrong but I will clear that up later. The whole thing is one year forward.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: That is a matter for the court, but I must point out to the court that the date is between 1st October 1942 and April 1945. I do not say this evidence is not admissible, but it cannot remain the subject matter of the charge as long as the witness adheres to this particular date.

COL. BACKHOUSE: I appreciate that, but I have satisfied myself that this is the right date as far as her recollection goes.

THE INTERPRETER: The witness pointed out Hoessler and spoke of doctors Bann and Keenig.

COL. BACKHOUSE: (To the witness) Do you recognise the Lagerfuhrer here ?
A. That is him, number 5.

(The witness leaves the Court)

COL. BACKHOUSE: A defending officer has asked me if the interpreter will translate the last remark that the witness made before she went out.

THE INTERPRETER: She said: "Here is the murderer who is responsible for the death of so many".

(The witness resumes her place)

COL. BACKHOUSE: You remember telling us about these selections. How were you clothed for the selection ? A. We had to leave our beds very quickly and stand quite naked to attention in front of the Lagerfuhrer Hoessler and the doctors.

Q What about the people who were ill in bed ? A. All those who could not leave their beds had their numbers taken and it was clear to us that those whose numbers were taken were condemned to death.

Q What sort of inspection took place ? A. Those whose bodies were not very nice looking or were too thin or whom those gentlemen disliked for some reason or other, their numbers were taken and it was clear what that meant.

Q Were you amongst those whose numbers were taken ? A. Yes.

Q What happened to you then ? A. We stayed in block number 4 for a night, and the next day we were taken to block number 18 and stayed there the whole day.

Q What happened to you then ? A. Then at about five or half past five in the evening trucks arrived and we were loaded into these trucks quite naked like animals.

- Q Where were you driven to ? A. The crematorium.
- Q When you reached the crematorium what happened there ? A. We left the trucks and were led into a room which gave me the impression of a shower bath. There were towels hanging round and sprays, and even mirrors.
- Q How did you leave the truck ? A. The whole truck was tipped over in the way as they do it sometimes with potatoes or coal loads.
- Q How many of you were there in the room altogether ? A. I cannot say really because I was so terrified about all these happenings that I have no idea about the numbers which were there.
- Q Were the doors closed ? A. I cannot say; I have never thought when I was there I shall leave and be here present in the court to speak about it.
- Q What happened next ? A. There were tears; people were shouting at each other; people were hitting each other. There were healthy people; strong people; weak people; and sick people, and suddenly I saw fumes coming in through a window.
- Q What do you mean when you say window ? A. (a top, very small sort of window.
- Q What effect did this have on you ? A. I had to cough very violently; tears were streaming out from my eyes, and I had a sort of feeling in my throat as if I would be asphyxiated.
- Q What happened to other people around you ? A. I could not look even at the others because each of us was only concentrated on what happened to himself.
- Q What was the next thing that you remember ? A. In that moment I heard my name called. I had not the strength to answer it, but I raised my arm. Then I felt somebody take me and throw me out from that room.
- Q When you got out did you see anyone there ? A. Then Keeseler took me on a motor-cycle - he put a blanket round me - and took me again into the hospital.
- Q How long did you stay in the hospital ? A. Six weeks.
- Q What effect did the gas have on you ? A. I have still quite frequently headaches; I have heart trouble, and whenever I went into the fresh air my eyes were filled with tears.
- Q Were you subsequently taken to the political department ? A. Yes.
- Q Did you receive any explanation as to why you had been taken out of the gas chamber ? A. Because I came with a transport from a prison which apparently makes a difference, and, apart from that, my husband was a Polish officer.
- Q After you came out of hospital how were you employed ? A. I came then in block number 26. Previously from that block people were sent on working parties.
- Q How were you employed yourself ? A. In the beginning I was employed in cleaning the room of the blackaltester and washing her laundry. Later on I was employed on latrine fatigues.
- Q How did you have to clean the latrine ? A. With my own hands I had to clean whatever was in the latrines, and there were no brooms or brushes or any sort of cleaning material which was given to me.
- Q Was that considered a good job or not ? A. Certainly, because sometimes we could warm ourselves near the stove and sometimes even wash one a shirt.
- Q What was your food at this time ? A. In the morning coffee; for lunch half a pint of vegetable soup, sometimes a quarter only; in the evening a ration of bread, sometimes something with it, sometimes without; and sometimes coffee.

COL. BACKHOUSE: I am not sure the translation was quite accurate. Did she say "half a litre", or "half a pint" ?

THE INTERPRETER : She said "half a litre"; I am sorry.

COL. BACKHOUSE: Did you then change on to another employment ? A For a few days I worked in the kitchen, but that type of work was too hard for me, so then later on, through the help of others, I took part in a working party called "Kanada", which was a work very much looked after. That work consisted of sorting out the belongings which came from other people who went to the crematorium.

Q How did you obtain that job ? A Through the help and influence of the blockaltester where I was working previously.

Q Whilst you were at Auschwitz, did you see anyone beaten ? A Yes, very severely beaten.

Q How often ? A I saw that very often; nearly every moment. Whenever I went into the camp I saw it.

Q With what type of things were people beaten ? A With rubber truncheons.

Q And for what type of offence were they beaten ? A There was no special reason, and no question why. Somebody went too fast, he got it. Somebody went too slow, he got it. Somebody had his hands in the pockets when the aufseherin went through, he got it. There was no question or no reason.

Q Were you subsequently transferred to Belsen ? A Yes. Before I arrived at Belsen I was at other camps as well.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: Can we have a date when she left Auschwitz ?

COL. BACKHOUSE: About what date did you leave Auschwitz ? A In the autumn of 1944.

Q When did you reach Belsen ? A Approximately three months before the liberation by the British troops.

Q When you reached Belsen how were you employed ? A In the first two days I worked in the hospital; then the lageraltester Stanislaw Staroska put me then to work in the kitchen.

Q Is the woman numbered 48, to whom you have just pointed, the woman who you have just recognised as lageraltester ? A Yes.

Q Who was in charge of the kitchen which you worked in ? A In kitchen No. 1 there was an oberscharfuhrer or unterscharfuhrer - I am not quite sure about the rank - then an S.S. woman and a Kapo called Lidia Sunaschein, who is present here. That was kitchen No. 2.

Q What was the number of the kitchen ? A No. 2.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: She is talking about No. 2., is she ?

COL. BACKHOUSE : That is what I want to get quite clear.

THE WITNESS: Yes, No. 2.

COL. BACKHOUSE: In the mens camp or womens camp ? A In the mens camp.

Q I want to get this quite clear, because I am told she mentioned both in that last answer. Were you always employed in the same kitchen whilst you were there ? A Only a few days in this one, and then in kitchen No. 1. In kitchen No. 1 there were two S.S. men, then one aufsehrin, a supervisor, and

one Jewish Kapo with the Christian name Hilde - I do not know the other name.

Q Do you remember an occasion shortly before the British arrived when the cookhouse was closed? A I do.

Q What happened on that occasion? A The man in charge of the kitchen told us: "I am going to look up the kitchen for an hour or two". All S.S. men had a meeting and then for an hour or an hour and a half we were waiting in front of the kitchen.

Q Did anything happen during that period? A Near the kitchen there were remains of vegetables, potatoes and all sorts of other vegetables, and one or other of the prisoners tried to get a potato or two. At that moment the S.S. men returned and started shooting and many many have been killed at that occasion.

Q I want you to come down here into the body of the Court and see who you can recognise amongst the accused. (The witness descends into the body of the Court). Have a look at the front row first. A No. 1., Lagerkommandant of Auschwitz (Kramer); No. 3 (Peter Weingartner) blockfuhrer. I know him from Auschwitz and Belsen. No. 5 (Hoessler), Lagerfuhrer from Auschwitz. *No. 8 (Herta Ehlert) oberaufsehrin from Belsen. No. 9 (Irma Gress), Aufsehrin from Auschwitz. No. 10 (Ilse Lothe) Kapo from Belsen and I know her from Auschwitz as well. She was in charge of a working party concerning vegetables and the transport of vegetables and potatoes and so on. No. 11 * (Hilde Lobauer) Arbeitsdienst from Belsen and Auschwitz. (The second row of accused then stood up). I have seen some of them in Belsen, but I cannot recognise them. (The third row of accused then stood up). No. 43 * (Johanne Roth) in charge of kitchen No. 2. No. 45 (Hildegard Hahnel) in the last few days in kitchen No. 1. *No. 46 (Helena Kopper) I remember her from Auschwitz, but I had nothing to do with her. *No. 48 (Stanislawa Staroska) Lageraltester in Auschwitz and Belsen. I recognise No. 33 * (Isle Forster) in charge of kitchen No. 1 in Belsen. I recognise No. 35 * (Klara Opitz) from Bergen-Belsen, an adjoining room to the kitchen where we had to work with potatoes. *No. 37 (Herta Lothe) and No. 39 (Irene Haschke) I remember from Belsen, but I had nothing to do with them.

Q Have you seen any of the persons whom you have recognised today beating anyone? A No. 33 (Isle Forster) in charge of kitchen No. 1. She hit to death a young girl 17 or 18 years.

Q Will you tell me the circumstances of that? A The girl took a potato, this woman saw it and took the girl into the kitchen. There she started beating her so severely that the poor girl could not help herself and defecated. Then this woman forced her to start eating her own excrement. I could not look longer, and I ran out of the kitchen.

Q Did you see what happened to the girl then? A Then she dragged the girl out of the kitchen and continued to beat her until her very death. She beat so many people there that there must be thousands who have seen it.

Q Did you see any other shooting whilst you were at Belsen, as well as the shooting you have told us about? A I saw that every day

COL. BACKHOUSE: That concludes my examination.

MAJOR WINWOOD: I have no questions.

Cross-examined by MAJOR MUNRO.

Q I understand from your examination-in-chief that you arrived at Auschwitz about Autumn, 1941; is that correct? A I do not remember the dates very exactly. I have been beaten so severely that I simply cannot say which date it was. But if I think I am almost certain that that must have been the date when I arrived in Auschwitz.

- Q And that you were selected for the gas chamber on a parade held on the 24th December, 1941 ? A I do not remember exactly the date; I know it must have been a few days before Christmas time. We had been hit so severely that I simply cannot remember exact dates.
- Q Apart from the injury to your leg which you have told us about, what was the state of your health at this date, that is, before you went into the gas chamber ? A I was perfectly healthy apart from having broken my leg.
- Q You have told us that you were taken to the gas chamber in morries; is that right ? A That is right.
- Q Did you see anyone being taken off a lorry on the way to the crematorium ? A No.
- Q About how long were you in the gas chamber in all ? A I cannot say exactly, but it was only for a short period; a minute or two perhaps.
- Q How long were you in the gas chamber while gas was being introduced into the room ? A Not long, for a very short time.
- Q At the time you were taken out of the gas chamber, were you suffering severely from the effects of the gas ? A Yes.
- Q Would it be right to say that you were in a state of collapse ? A I felt sort of giddy, being quite giddy in my head. Then a sudden blackness descended upon my eyes and like a heavy load on my chest.
- Q When you got outside was the man who took you out wearing a gas mask ? A I do not know.
- Q Were you able to see properly at that time ? A I was in such a state that I myself I did not know what happened to me; I did not know whether I am alive or whether I shall stay alive or what is going to happen with me.
- Q I would not like to ask you some general questions about Auschwitz. Is it the case that Auschwitz was a very large camp consisting of a number of smaller ones ? A Yes.
- Q Who was the Commandant of the whole Auschwitz camp ? A Kramer.
- Q Do you remember a commandant called Hoess ? A Yes, I have heard his name, but I myself have never seen him.
- Q In which of the smaller camps were you ? A Berkenau.
- Q And who was the commandant of Berkenau ? A Kramer.
- Q Was Berkenau itself sub-divided into smaller lagers ? A Yes, A., B., C., B2, and gypsy camp. It was sub-divided into smaller quarters. There was also a mixed compound for families.
- Q Can you tell us who was in charge of each of these smaller lagers ? A There was only one commandant whom I know, that is Kramer; I do not know the others.
- Q Lastly, in which of these smaller lagers were you ? A In Berkenau, compound A. and compound B, and in the last few days in B2B.

- Q And that you were selected for the gas chamber on a parade held on the 24th December, 1941 ? A I do not remember exactly the date; I know it must have been a few days before Christmas time. We had been hit so severely that I simply cannot remember exact dates.
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- Q Lastly, in which of these smaller lagers were you ? A In Berkenau, compound A. and compound B, and in the last few days in B2B.

Cross-examined by MAJOR CRANFIELD.

- Q When you were liberated from Belsen, were you in a condition of extreme emaciation caused by starvation? A We were terribly hungry in Belsen.
- Q Would you answer the question. I do not want to know whether you were hungry. I want to know whether you were in a condition of extreme emaciation? A We were not to be recognised. We had the aspect of old women of 60 and 70 and our faces were lined although we were still young.
- Q How many times were you beaten? A Very often; several times per day was I beaten by the aufsehrin.
- Q How many times did you have to go to hospital for the injuries inflicted on you by the beatings? A Nobody bothered about us, whether we ought to go to the hospital or not. Thousands were beaten without going to hospital.
- Q Did you ever go to hospital as a result of a beating? A Who would have admitted me to the hospital? There was nobody who cared for human beings.

THE PRESIDENT: Is that an answer to the question?

MAJOR CRANFIELD: I am satisfied with that. That is as far as we shall get. (To the witness); Will you bring to your mind the most serious beating you ever received?

A We were beaten every day ourselves, but nevertheless we could see how other people were beaten as well.

- Q I want you to recall to your mind the most serious beating you received so that I can ask you questions about it, and if you will indicate that you have in your mind the occasion I will go on.

A I understand the question. The beating was so bad that always a beating

of the previous day seemed weaker. It was unbearable; that is how

we were beaten.

Q. Who gave you that beating? A. This woman who I point out, No. 33, (Iale Forster) officer in charge of kitchen No. 1.

Q. What did she strike you with? A. Either with her hand or with a stick or whatever she found near her.

Q. What I should have said was: what did she strike you with on this occasion?

THE INTERPRETER: Which occasion?

MAJOR CRANFIELD: The occasion she is describing to the court, the worst beating she ever had.

THE WITNESS: On that occasion, he had a rubber truncheon.

MAJOR CRANFIELD: What were the injuries you suffered as a result? A. My head was swollen and my arms and my back was quite blue and green because of these blows.

Q. Do you remember making a statement on oath to a British officer at Belsen after the liberation? A. Yes, I do.

Q. Did he ask you to tell him of any injuries you received while you were in a concentration camp and to accuse the person responsible? A. It was a very short interview I had with this officer, and he was mainly concerned with the question of the gas chambers and with the question of the killing of this young girl whom I mentioned before.

Q. I suggest to you that you had more than one interview with a British officer or a British soldier at Belsen with regard to making a statement. A. I did not give very many details about these things. These officers and British soldiers were quite amazed about the amount of suffering we had to go through.

2 (witness)

Q. I suggest to you that it was well known in the camp that you were invited to make accusations against specific persons. A. There were many persons who pronounced such accusations, not I alone.

Q. If this was such a severe beating and you knew the person who had given it to you why did you not mention it to the officer taking your statement?

A. I did not know her name at that time, but I did recognise her from photos which were shown to me.

Q. If that is so can you explain why the accusation does not appear in your statement? A. Because the question of beatings in the camp were without any importance; there was nothing extraordinary in it, we were beaten when we got up, we were beaten when we went to have some food. The beating was just as normal as in normal ordinary life to go to the cinema or to go to a dance.

Q. I suggest to you that when you say the beatings were not important that is true, and that your account of them here today is exaggerated and untrue. What do you say to that? A. Only a person who has gone through it and who has suffered it has a right to speak about it, and not somebody who does not know anything about it.

Q. Can you say, remembering you are on your oath, whether you have ever seen that man before? (Indicating No. 12, Josef Klippel) A. I have seen him in Bergen-Belsen, but what his functions were I cannot say. I have seen him in a kitchen.

Q. Why did you not recognise him when the lights were turned on and you had an opportunity of inspecting the accused row by row? A. I had nothing to do with him. Very often one sees persons - after all, there were many German soldiers there, and as I had nothing to do with him I passed him.

- Q. I suggest to you that you are mistaken. Do you swear that you have seen that man at Belsen? A. I cannot swear to that. I had nothing to do with him and therefore I might be mistaken; he might have been there or not, I am not sure.
- Q. I suggest to you that the same thing applies to the rest of your evidence and that you are a thoroughly unreliable witness. What do you say to that? A. Only a man can say that who has not the slightest inkling about conditions, be it in Bergen-Belsen, be it in Auschwitz. What I have seen and what I have said there are thousands of others who can say exactly the same thing.

CAPT. ROBERTS: No questions.

Cross-examined by CAPT. BROWN.

- Q. Was Kramer commandant of Berkenau all the time that you were there?
A. I cannot say. I have been only a very small particle in the big camp of Auschwitz. I know only whenever we heard Kramer is going to visit the camp we were all trembling.
- Q. You have referred to No.2 cookhouse. Do you know the name of the man who was in charge of that cookhouse? A. We were never allowed to speak about any S.S. personnel by name, names were taboo for us. We knew only ranks, Oberscharfuhrer, Unterscharfuhrer, Oberoffizier, Unteroffizier or chef. Names were never pronounced.
- Q. Was that man in charge of No.2 cookhouse? (Indicating No.18, Fritz Mathes)
A. No, I cannot recognise that man, but I recognise No.44. (Anna Hempel)

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: As what? A. She was supervisor in the kitchen.

Cross-examined by CAPT. FIELDEN.

- Q. I want to ask you some questions about the incidents which you said took place after kitchen No.1 had been closed down. You said that those incidents took place shortly before the British arrived. Can you give the court a more accurate time as to when those incidents took place?
A. Quite shortly before the British troops entered and liberated the camp, not a week, only perhaps a few days before.
- Q. You said that you waited for an hour or a hour and a half in front of the kitchen before the S.S. men returned. Can you give us a more accurate time during which you waited in front of the kitchen before the return of the S.S. men? A. I cannot say clearer because I had no watch.
- Q. Did any shooting take place in the vicinity of No.1 kitchen before the return of the S.S. men? A. Shootings were a very frequent occurrence, often at 3 or 3.30 in the morning when we got up we saw people lying about. I remember one man who was shot dead and who had still a small turnip in his hand. They were reasons why people were shot.
- Q. Can you say of your own knowledge whether on that particular afternoon there were any shootings in the vicinity of No.1 kitchen whilst you were waiting outside there before the return of the S.S. men? A. I cannot say exactly; shots were heard every moment. Then later when the S.S. men did arrive shots were coming from all sides around us.
- Q. I am still talking of the same incident. How many prisoners were stealing vegetables at the time when the S.S. men returned? I simply want the number. A. These prisoners did not steal; they just tried to get one potato or one turnip.

THE PRESIDENT: I do not think that question was asked.

CAPT. FIELDEN: I want to know the number of people around the vegetables. How many prisoners were there attempting to obtain vegetables?

- A. One or two attempted to get these vegetables I was talking about, and eight or nine bodies killed were lying about the kitchen.
- Q. How far away from the kitchen were the S.S. men when the shooting started?
- A. They were very near to the kitchen; they shot quite indiscriminately and they did not bother whether anybody of the kitchen personnel was killed, or any other prisoners.
- Q. Can you tell the court the number of shooting incidents in which you know of your own knowledge that the S.S. personnel in No. 1 kitchen were concerned?
- A. I cannot say exactly how many; people were very hungry and were very dirty and under such condition they only thought about themselves, whether they will survive this very day until the next day when liberation may come.
- Q. How long did you work in kitchen No. 1? A. Always, apart from a few days when I was working in kitchen No. 2.
- Q. Have you ever seen that man before? (Indicating No. 22 Anchor Pinchen)
- A. I do not remember; I had nothing to do with No. 22.
- Q. I suggest to you that the shooting incident which you say took place on the day the S.S. men had their meeting, and all the other shooting incidents which you say took place outside No. 1 kitchen, are quite imaginary. What do you say to that? A. There are thousands of people who know about these incidents, and all those people who had been working in kitchen No. 1. After all, some of them are still alive; they can say exactly the same things which I say.
- Q. Had either of the two S.S. men in kitchen No. 1 any physical deformity?
- A. I did not see the bodies of those two men; whether they had wounds or any other deformities I cannot say.
- Q. Do you know where the clothing store was? A. In Auschwitz or Bergen-Belsen?
- Q. In Belsen? A. Not very far from the kitchen in the men's compound.
- Q. How far in metres. Can you give an estimation? A. It was in the vicinity of the food stores. I cannot say exactly how many metres. It was the second or third block; one block near the other, and that was the second or third.

Cross-examined by CAPT. CORBALLY.

- Q. Do you recognise that man? (Indicating No. 28, Eric Barach) A. I had nothing to do with him. Maybe I have seen him but I do not know.
- Q. Would you recognise the two S.S. men in the No. 1 cookhouse? A. Certainly.
- Q. I am speaking of a time just before the camp was liberated. You are quite sure, are you, that this man was not one of the S.S. men in that cookhouse? A. I am quite certain.

Cross-examined by CAPT. NEAVE.

- Q. When you made a statement before the British officer were you shown photographs? A. Yes.
- Q. Did you recognise on one of these photographs No. 33? (Isle Forster)
- A. Yes.
- Q. Why did you not say anything about No. 33 in your statement? A. If I tell everything what we have been going through and suffered in Auschwitz or in other concentration camps it would take months. Unfortunately, many people do not believe it, but those who went through that time they know what it is all about.

Q. I want to speak now about the girl whom you saw killed by No. 33 (Isle Forster) Did you work in No. 1 kitchen? A. Yes.

Q. What was the nationality of the girl you spoke about? A. She was a Jewess. Whether she was a Hungarian Jewess or a Polish Jewess I cannot say.

MAJOR GRANFIELD: With regard to the translation of that last answer, my interpreter tells me that the witness said "or a German."

THE WITNESS: Whether she was a Hungarian or a Polish Jewess or a German Jewess I do not know.

CAPT. NEAVE: You have told us that No. 33 (Isle Forster) dragged the girl outside. Did you see the girl die? A. Yes.

Q. I suggest to you that the girl whom you say you saw die was working in No. 1 kitchen on the following day. A. That girl had never been working in the kitchen.

Q. Can you think harder and try and remember if the girl we are speaking about was Polish, Hungarian, Russian or German? A. I cannot.

Q. How long did the girl take to die? A. She beat her until she was dead, and when she died she still kicked her with her foot, then she returned to the kitchen and laughed hysterically.

Q. How did you know the girl was dead? A. We went out later from the kitchen and saw her, then two men came and dragged her away, whether to the crematorium or to be buried elsewhere I do not know.

Q. You have told us it was No. 33 (Isle Forster) who beat the girl. What did No. 33 (Isle Forster) use to beat the girl with? A. With a rubber truncheon.

Q. Are you sure it was not a wooden stick? A. No, she was always carrying a rubber truncheon.

Q. You recognise this woman. (Indicating No. 8, Herta Ehlert) Have you ever seen her beating anybody? A. No.

CAPT. PHILLIPS: No questions.

LT. BOYD: No questions.

CAPT. MUNRO: No questions.

Cross-examined by LT. JERZY KOWALCZ.

Q. Before reaching the wire surrounding the Auschwitz camp did one have to get across a ditch? A. Yes.

Q. Was it possible for a prisoner to get easily across the ditch? A. It was not easy. The ditch was in parts of the camp inside the barbed wire, and in parts outside.

Q. Was the ditch inside at Berkenau? A. In Compound A, where I was, it was inside.

Q. When you left hospital and you came to block 26 who was the eldest in this block? A. A Polish woman called Paffendorf or Paffendorf; I do not remember exactly, but the Lagermeister will know exactly what the name is. I only remember something like Paffendorf.

Q. How often did you carry food containers from the kitchen into the food distribution point at Auschwitz? A. Not very often, because this work was changed about amongst prisoners.

Q. Were you or others carrying these food containers never swarmed by prisoners or approached by individual prisoners trying to get food before the distribution had started? A. Yes, often prisoners came and begged for food, but we were not allowed.

Q. How did you manage to keep them away from you and from the containers?

A. It was very difficult to keep them away. Sometimes particularly the Russian girls came with their small mugs and stole a few drops of the soup. Of course we were beaten later because of these incidents, but what could we do, they were simply too hungry.

Q. Did the women prisoners have their hair always clipped or not? A. All of them had their hair clipped. For a short time the Ayran women kept their hair long, but that was only for a short time, but they changed again and everybody had their hair clipped. At the end of 1944 the Ayran women could keep their hair long and it was not clipped.

Q. Between Auschwitz and Belsen you went through other camps. Were those camps concentration camps or not? A. Yes, they were concentration camps.

Q. Were those camps very much like Auschwitz camp? A. No.

Q. Did you see at Auschwitz or Belsen camp a prisoner steal food or some other odd things from another prisoner? A. Yes, certainly.

Q. If you saw your fellowprisoner during distribution try to get food for a second time, and by doing so depriving you of your share, if hit by a blockaltester would you blame the blockaltester? If a prisoner came to you when you were distributing soup and asked for a second time to get soup and you had not yet got your first share would you, if the prisoner was hit by a blockaltester, blame the blockaltester for hitting the prisoner.

THE INTERPRETER: Not stealing, but asking for a second time?

LT. JEDREJOWICZ: Asking for a second time.

THE WITNESS: If a blockaltester hits the prisoner badly then I prefer to go without food myself.

Q. Do you think everybody felt the same? A. All those who have been in concentration camps feel like that.

COL. BACKHOUSE: I have no questions to ask in re-examination.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: Do you agree that you went to Auschwitz in the autumn of 1941? A. I had to suffer so many beatings, and I was so ill so often that my mind is not quite clear. I do remember that it was autumn, but whether it was 1941 or not I do not remember; I know it was autumn.

Q. Do you agree or not that you left Auschwitz about the autumn of 1944?
A. Yes, quite certain.

Q. Have the Jews any particular date in their calendar which they pay particular attention to? A. Yes, the Jewish New Year.

Q. Can you say one way or the other how many New Years you think you spent at Auschwitz? A. We did not know what date it was; we did not know whether it was New Year or not. We were living like animals and not like human beings.

Q. Can you say how long you were in prison before you went to Auschwitz?

A. I was arrested on the 19th May 1940. I have been questioned by the Gestapo eighteen times, and I have been beaten so severely that I cannot control all my thoughts. I do remember however that I had been longer than a year in that prison at Lublin.

Q. Do you remember about how long it was after you had come to Auschwitz that you broke your leg? A. Not very long, perhaps five or six weeks.

Q. Do you remember talking is here about the beating of the young girl, which you say was done by Hl. 33, Iale Forster, when the girl was supposed to have died after trying to steal some vegetables? A. Yes.

Q. Will you accept that the British came to Belsen on the 15th April 1945? A. Yes.

Q. How long before that date was it that you say this young girl was beaten to death by Ilse Forster? A. Perhaps a month, or perhaps five or six weeks. (He cannot be sure about dates.)

Q. Have you any recollection of any other similar incident at all where a woman was supposed to have been killed when she was attempting to get some potatoes or some vegetable? A. No.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: I have purposely left the matter there. If there is anybody on the defending side who wish to put any further questions arising from what I have just been dealing with that is a matter for you to ask the President. If not we will leave it where it is.

THE PRESIDENT: Has anybody any questions.

(None of the defending officers asked any further questions)

(The witness withdraws)

(At 1320 hours the court is closed)

(At 14,30 hours the Court is re-opened.)

(The accused are again brought before the Court.)

COL. BACKHOUSE: I understand that Capt. Forster the German interpreter who has been interpreting since we began feels it is time he would like a relief. There is another officer here, Lt. Pastema of the Netherlands Interpreter Corps. I was wondering whether he could be sworn as well and then we can possibly relieve him from time to time.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

(Lt. G. Pastema, Netherlands Interpreter Corps, attached 179 Regiment, Royal Artillery, is duly sworn as an additional German interpreter.)

OECILIA FROMMER is called in and having been duly sworn is examined by COL. BACKHOUSE as follows:-

Q What is your full name? A. Oecilia Frommer.

Q What is your permanent address? A. 43 Trudna, Bokhnia, near Cracow.

Q What is your nationality? A. Polish.

Q When were you arrested? A. I have not been arrested; I was evacuated from my town with the other Jews.

Q When were you evacuated from your town? A. At the end of September, 1943.

THE POLISH INTERPRETER: I am sorry, the witness corrected her statement; it was not September but the tenth month of the year.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: Col. Backhouse, we have the right affidavit, have we?

COL. BACKHOUSE: I hope so, there is only one.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: It is odd that even on these most elementary things there is a discrepancy.

COL. BACKHOUSE: There is only one and that is the date.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: She said she was evacuated from her own town when?

THE WITNESS: October, 1943.

COL. BACKHOUSE: Where were you taken to? A. To a lager camp at Szebine near Jaslo.

Q How long did you stay there? A. Only eight days.

Q To where were you taken from there? A. Afterwards we went to Auschwitz.

Q How many people were there in the transport that arrived there with you?
A I do not know the exact number but I know there were 1,500 women and children.

Q About what time of day did you arrive there? A. It was about two o'clock at night.

Q By two o'clock at night do you mean two o'clock in the afternoon or in the morning; can you take it by the 24 hour clock? A. It was two o'clock in the early morning.

THE PRESIDENT: 0200 hours? A. Yes.

COL. BACKHOUSE: When you arrived there what was the first thing that happened?

- A We had to line up in fives and a German officer looked at us and said: "This one goes left and this one goes right".
- Q Who was sent to the left and who to the right? A. About 400 women were standing on the left and they were sent into the camp; the others were loaded on trucks and went away.
- Q Was your mother and your brother with you on the transport? A. My mother was not with me, I lost her before. With me were my father and my brother.
- Q What happened to your father and your brother? A. I do not know what happened to them but two weeks ago I heard about my brother who was at Buchenwald.
- Q What happened to you after this selection? A. We were taken into the huts and there everything we possessed was taken away from us and we were left quite naked.
- Q What happened after that? A. Then the numbers were tattooed on our arms, we had our hair shaved off, we received old clothes and we were sent to blocks.
- Q What were the conditions like in the block to which you were sent? A. There were kind of bunks two above each other and five or six people had to sleep in each bunk; we received two blankets.
- Q How long were you in that block? A. In this block I only was two weeks.
- Q Where did you go from there? A. I was sent to hospital as a nurse.
- Q How long did you work in the hospital? A. I had not been working for a long time in hospital, about four weeks, then I caught typhus and stayed there as a patient.
- Q Whilst you were in hospital did you see any selections made? A. I have not seen the selections because I was in a block with Germans and only a few Poles and the selections were only made with Jews.
- Q Whilst you were there did you ever see anyone beaten? A. I was the only one who was beaten there because a block fuhrer came into the block and asked for Jews and then they pointed me out; I was beaten and taken away to another block.
- Q How had you come to be in the German block as opposed to the Jewish block in the hospital? A. It was because I had been working as a nurse in this block and when I fell ill they kept me there as a patient.
- Q After you recovered did you see any beatings in the camp? A. I have seen beatings, I have been beaten myself; after I left the hospital I went to a special block for people with skin diseases and I was beaten there and there is still a scar on my face.
- Q Who beat you? A. The slave administrator has beaten me by order of another one - by order of somebody else.
- Q Do you remember an occasion when you had to kneel down for a time? A. Yes.
- Q Will you tell the Court about that occasion? A. When I was no more ill I was sent to camp "B". I had a girl friend who was ill in hospital. I went to see her and had to pass through camp "A". I had to pass through a gate. When coming back near the gate the fuhrerin saw me and asked me what I was doing. Then she beat me severely and I had to kneel down for a time near the gate.
- Q What part of your body did she beat? A. She slapped me with her hands in the face.

Q Will you look at the people in the dock and see if you can recognise the woman you are speaking of? A. No. 7 (Elizabeth Volkenrath) looks very much like her but I think it is her sister.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: What was that?

THE INTERPRETER: She says this woman looks very much like the woman who beat her but she thinks it must be the sister of this woman who did it.

COL. BACHHOFF: Do you recognise this woman when you picked out not as your personal beater but do you know who she is? A. Yes, I have seen her in the camp many times but I know there were two sisters and I do not know exactly who of these beat me.

Q Have you been beaten on any other occasion in the camp? A. Yes.

Q Once or more than once? A. Several times.

Q Have you seen other people beaten? A. Very often.

Q Did you eventually go to Belsen? A. Yes.

Q On what date did you go to Belsen? A. On the 18th January, 1945, I left Auschwitz.

Q How long did it take you to reach Belsen? A. I cannot exactly remember how long, but it was some days.

Q When you reached Belsen what block were you in there? A. 218, I believe.

Q How were you employed at Belsen? A. I have been working in kitchen No. 2.

Q Is that No. 2 kitchen in the men's camp or the women's camp? A. It was not in one of these compounds; it was near the main road but near the men's camp.

Q Who was in charge of that kitchen? A. It was an Oberscharfuhrer but I do not know his name.

Q Did you see anyone beaten in that camp? A. Yes.

Q A few people or many people? A. Many people, but especially I saw one kape being beaten near a gate.

Q Did you see any shooting there? A. Yes.

Q Who was doing the shooting? A. It was a Hungarian block fuhrer who had been working together with the man in charge of my kitchen and he shot a man for stealing a turnip.

MAJOR WINWOOD: No questions.

MAJOR MURDO: No questions.

MAJOR CHAMFIELD: No questions.

MAJOR ROBERTS: No questions.

Cross-examined by GAFI. BROWN.

Q You have referred to kitchen No. 2. Can you remember if the name of the cook in charge of that cookhouse was Hasekall? A. I cannot remember the name but I could tell what he looked like.

Q Would the accused No. 18 (Fritz Mathes) stand up? (The accused does so.) Was that the man? A. No.

Q Will you look at the people in the dock and see if you can recognise the woman you are speaking of? A. No. 7 (Elizabeth Volkenrath) looks very much like her but I think it is her sister.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: What was that?

THE INTERPRETER: She says this woman looks very much like the woman who beat her but she thinks it must be the sister of this woman who did it.

Q. BACHMEIER: Do you recognise this woman when you picked out not as your personal beater but do you know who she is? A. Yes, I have seen her in the camp many times but I know there were two sisters and I do not know exactly who of these beat me.

Q Have you been beaten on any other occasion in the camp? A. Yes.

Q Once or more than once? A. Several times.

Q Have you seen other people beaten? A. Very often.

Q Did you eventually go to Belsen? A. Yes.

Q On what date did you go to Belsen? A. On the 18th January, 1945, I left Auschwitz.

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Q When you reached Belsen what block were you in there? A. 218, I believe.

Q How were you employed at Belsen? A. I have been working in kitchen No. 2.

Q Is that No. 2 kitchen in the men's camp or the women's camp? A. It was not in one of these compounds; it was near the main road but near the men's camp.

Q Who was in charge of that kitchen? A. It was an Oberscharfuhrer but I do not know his name.

Q Did you see anyone beaten in that camp? A. Yes.

Q A few people or many people? A. Many people, but especially I saw one large being beaten near a gate.

Q Did you see any shooting there? A. Yes.

Q Who was doing the shooting? A. It was a Hungarian block fuhrer who had been working together with the man in charge of my kitchen and he shot a man for stealing a turnip.

MAJOR WINWOOD: No questions.

MAJOR HIBB: No questions.

MAJOR CRAWFELD: No questions.

MAJOR BENNETT: No questions.

Cross-examined by CAPT. BROWN.

Q You have referred to kitchen No. 2. Can you remember if the name of the cook in charge of that cookhouse was Haackel? A. I cannot remember the name but I could tell what he looked like.

Q Would the accused No. 18 (Fritz Mathes) stand up? (The accused does so.) Was that the man? A. No.

CAPT. FINKEL: No questions.

CAPT. CONRALLY: No questions.

CAPT. HEAVE: No questions.

CAPT. PHILLIPS: No questions.

Cross-examined by LT. RYD.

Q Is it correct that people who worked in canteens, prisoners who worked in canteens, got additional rations? A. Because they worked in the kitchen they could get some more soup but no bread because there was no bread.

Cross-examined by CAPT. MURDO.

Q You said you saw a kapo being beaten by a gate. Can you tell the Court whether you saw many kapos beaten at Belsen? A. I only saw one kapo being beaten.

LT. JEDERJONICK: No questions.

COL. BACKHOUSE: No re-examination.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: Do you say that No. 7 has a sister? A. Yes.

Q Do you say they are alike or not? A. Yes, they are like.

Q Were they serving in the S.S. or not? A. Yes, both of them.

Q Do you know their Christian names at all? A. No, I only know the name of one was "Vinegar".

Q Do you know which was the elder? A. No.

Q At the time you say you were beaten were they performing similar duties or different duties? A. I do not know what kind of duties they were doing.

Q Where had you come across these two S.S. women then? A. I very often saw them in the camp.

Q Can you say one way or the other whether the woman in Court is the woman you call "Vinegar" or not? A. I cannot tell exactly who she is; I only know she is one of the two sisters who looked alike.

THE PRESIDENT: Have the defence any points on those raised by the Court?

(No response.)

(The witness withdraws.)

ANNI JONAS is called in and having been duly sworn is examined by COL. BACKHOUSE as follows:-

Q What is your full name? A. Anni Jonas.

Q What was your address before the war? A. No. 9 Wall Street, Breslau.

Q How old are you? A. 25.

Q Were you arrested? A. Yes.

Q When were you arrested? A. 17th June, 1943.

Q Why were you arrested? A. Because I am a Jewess.

Q Where were you taken to? A. To Auschwitz.

Q How long did you stay there? A. Until the 25th November, 1944.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: When did you go to Auschwitz? A. 17th June, 1943.

COL. BACKHOUSE: When you were in Auschwitz did you attend any selections?
A Yes.

Q What were the selections for? A. For the purpose of gassing the people.

Q Who were picked out for gassing? A. Jews.

Q Which Jews? A. Sick people and weak looking people.

Q Where did these selections take place? A. In front of the blocks or in the meadows behind the blocks or in the shower bath.

Q What clothes did you wear on selection? A. Civilian clothes with stripes and on the back a cross in red colour.

Q Did you keep your clothes on during the selection? A. Sometimes we kept our clothes on but if the selection took place in the bath house then we were quite naked.

Q Who did the selecting? A. The camp doctor, Dr. Mengale and Hessler.

Q Did you see any other S.S. persons there at those selections? A. Yes, an oberoffizierin but I do not remember the name.

Q Come down into the Court and see if you can recognise anyone here. (The witness does so.) A. I know No. 1, Kramer; No. 3 blockfuhrer; No. 5 Hessler; No. 6 Borman; No. 7 Greag; No. 8 oberoffizierin at Belsen whose name I do not know; No. 9 I know from Auschwitz but I do not know her name; No. 10 is a kuge; No. 11 is arbeits leader of working parties; No. 22 was in charge of kitchen No. 1 in Belsen, and No. 48 is lager altester.

Q You recognise No. 1 as Kramer. What was his position at Auschwitz?

A He was lager commandant, camp commandant, in Auschwitz.

Q The next person you recognised was Hessler. What do you know about Hessler?

A His rank is untersturmfuhrer and he was in charge of a kommando called "Union" in Auschwitz.

Q You told us you had seen Hessler at selections. What part did he take on the selection parade? A. He made selections in the kommando which I mentioned called "Union".

Q What were those selections for? A. To send away sick and weak people out of this kommando.

Q Where did they go to? A. They were sent into Compound "A" and were collected in Block 25.

Q Where did they go from Block 25? A. Into the gas chamber.

Q The next person you recognised was No. 6, Borman. What do you know about her? A. This offizierin, supervisor, was also several times present at these selections.

Q Did she take any active part in the selection? A. I have seen how this offizierin, this supervisor, Borman pointed out to Dr. Mengale several, saying: "This one looks quite weak; she can be taken away as well".

MAJOR WINWOOD: No questions.

- Q What is your nationality? A. I am a Jewess from Germany.
- Q Were doctors always present on these selections? A. By these selections which were made by Hessler in the basement "Union" no doctor was present.
- Q Do you know of your own personal knowledge what happened to people on these selections to which you now refer? A. I was once present during one of these selections in Block No. 2, all the sick and weak people were locked into the bread stores and then later on they were fetched away.
- Q Were you present to see what happened when they were fetched away?
A No.
- Q Do you know what instructions were given to the S.S. people in respect of these parades? A. They had the orders to gas all these people.
- Q Is that a matter of your own personal knowledge? A. Yes.
- Q Will you explain to the Court how it comes that you came into possession of that knowledge? A. All these people after the selections went to the gas chambers and we saw how the trucks did go really to the gas chambers.
- Q Perhaps you have misunderstood my question. Will you explain how you know what instructions were given by the doctors to the S.S. men and women?

(No answer)

THE INTERPRETER: She must have misunderstood that question. She said "Yes" not to the question that she knows what orders the S.S. had received, but she said "Yes" that she knows what happened to the people after the selections; the "Yes" was not concerned with the orders.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: She has not answered the question.

MAJOR MUNRO: Am I correct in saying that you do not know what orders the

doctors gave to the S.S. men and women on selections?

A I do not know.

- Q When people were selected on parade were they made to stand aside somewhere else ? A. No, their numbers were written down.
- Q After that was the parade dismissed ? A. Those whose numbers were written down were sent in block number 25.
- Q Were they sent away from there or were they sent from their own blocks at a later time ? A. Immediately after the selection.
- Q When you refer to compound A and block 25, are you speaking of matters within your own personal knowledge ? A. What I saw myself.
- Q Can you say with certainty that everybody who was chosen on this parade went to block 25 ? A. Yes.
- Q Is it not the case that some of them were sent away as labour parties ?
A. One heard it now and again that some of those who were condemned to go to the gas chambers were recalled again sometimes.

MAJOR CRANFIELD: No questions.

CAPT. ROBERTS: No questions.

CAPT. BROWN: No questions.

CAPT. FIELDEN: No questions.

CAPT. CORBALLY: No questions.

CAPT. NEAVE: No questions.

CAPT. PHILLIPS: No questions.

LT. BEYD: No questions.

CAPT. MUNRO: No questions

LT. JEDRZEJOWICZ: No questions.

COL. BACKHOUSE: No re-examination.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: Did you go to Belsen ? A. Yes.

- Q When did you go to Belsen ? A. In the beginning of February 1945.
- Q What sort of a job did you have at Belsen ? A. I was working at a sort of transport system by bringing potatoes and turnips which were cut in one kitchen to another.
- Q Where did you sleep at nights in Belsen ? A. At first in block number 205 and then later in number 201.
- Q Did you have any difficulty in sleeping at night in Belsen ? A. Yes, in block 201 I did not have a bed and I slept in the corridor in the gargway.
- Q Did you ever have a bed in Belsen ? A. Yes, in block 205.
- Q Did you have a bed to yourself ? A. No, we were four.
- Q Did you find the food better or worse at Belsen than at Auschwitz ? A. Worse.
- Q Could you wash yourself at Belsen in the six weeks you were there ? A. Very rarely.

Q When you did wash, how did you wash? A. In the wash-house.

THE PRESIDENT: Have the defending officers any questions to put on the points raised by the court?

(The defending officers had no questions)

(The witness withdraws)

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: Colonel Backhouse, this may save a little time. The court have been struck by the fact that certain witnesses who were at Belsen have been asked to describe in very great detail what the conditions were there. We also notice that to others who were there at the same time, for instance, the last witness who was there for six weeks, the prosecution put no question at all to them on that aspect of the case. We were just wondering whether we would be right in assuming that these witnesses have not made any complaint at all of the conditions at the camp.

COL. BACKHOUSE: All these witnesses could be asked that, but when one is prosecuting one has to take the view that some points have been sufficiently dealt with and move to other points. I can call a body of evidence with regard to the conditions at Belsen and I can take each one of them through their experiences at both Auschwitz and Belsen, but we will never finish the trial.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: The court do not require you to do that, but they wanted to make sure that your reason for not questioning them was not because they could not say anything at all about it.

DORA SZAFRAN is called in and having been duly sworn is examined by COL. BACKHOUSE as follows:-

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: The witness has taken the oath on a Jewish bible which she considers to be binding on her conscience.

COL. BACKHOUSE: What is your full name? A. Dora Szafran.

Q How do you spell that? A. S.Z.A.F.R.A.N.

Q What is the address of your home? A. 74 Eisengasse, Warsaw, Flat 49.

Q How old are you? A. 22 years.

Q When were you arrested? A. On the 9th May 1943.

Q Why were you arrested?

MAJOR CRANFIELD: I want to object to that question. We have had the same sort of question asked all the witnesses and, in my submission, it is irrelevant why the witnesses were arrested. It does not form part of either charge against the accused, and it may tend to prejudice the accused.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: I think, sir, that we may hear evidence that some of these internees were criminal, and I think it is only fair that you should know, if you have to test the credibility or assess the weight to be attached to a witness's evidence, the reason why she was put into a concentration camp. It is relevant that the Court should know, so far as can be ascertained of the particular witness, whether or not she was a criminal and was put into a camp, because the defence are entitled hereafter to say: The witness was a criminal or a prostitute, and we ask you not to pay any attention to what she says. I am bound to advise you, therefore, that that is not introduced for the purpose of prejudice, but is properly placed before you in order to assist you when taking into account what weight you attach to the witness's testimony.

THE PRESIDENT: You are perfectly entitled to put that question for the reasons the Judge Advocate has pointed out.

COL. BACKHOUSE: I would go further and say it is part of my case, because one of the laws and usages of war is that no-one will be ill-treated because of their religion. (To the witness) I will repeat my question. Where were you arrested? A. Because I am a Jewess.

Q When you were arrested where were you sent to? A. Maydenek.

Q For how long were you there? A. Seven weeks, I think.

Q Where did you go from there? A. From Maydenek I went in the first transport to Auschwitz.

Q When did you arrive in Auschwitz? A. I arrived on the 25th June 1943.

COL. BACKHOUSE: I can, if you feel I should, go through the normal procedure of the numbering, shaving, bathing, and so on, but my own view is that it is not necessary to go on asking those questions.

THE PRESIDENT: We leave that to your discretion.

COL. BACKHOUSE: (To the witness) When you arrived at Auschwitz in which block were you placed? A. I was placed in the second block in A lager.

Q Will you tell the court very shortly what happened to you before you were put into your block? A. When we arrived there were roughly 6000 of us. We went to a transit barrack, and after that we had numbers tattooed on our arms. After the tattooing, which lasted nearly all day because there was a French transport in at the same time, we were sent to the showers. Next I was hit by one of the Capos and I still have the mark on my arm.

Q Will you show the court that scar on your arm?

(The court examines the witness's arm and find it bears a substantial scar)

THE PRESIDENT: Is this the mark you got from the time you were taken? A. Yes.

COL. BACKHOUSE: Why did the Capo strike you? A. I might answer that by saying it happened to me because I was a Jewess. People were sent to the gas chamber for being Jews.

Q You have spoken of people being sent to the gas chamber; did you see any selections for the gas chamber? A. I myself went through several selections.

Q Who made the selection? A. Kramer, Hoessler, Tauber, Dretzler, Dr. Klein, and Dr. Mengele all took part at one time or another in the selections.

Q Were any women present helping with the selection? A. Yes.

Q Would you come down and look at the accused in the box and see if you can recognise any of them? A. The first is the camp commandant at Auschwitz and Belsen, Kramer; No. 2 is Dr. Klein; No. 5 is Hoessler; No. 6 is Borman; No. 9 is Grese; No. 16 was my overseer in the kitchen.

THE PRESIDENT: Do you know the name of No. 16? A. No. I think that No. 29 was a Lageraltester, but I am not certain. No. 48 is Lageraltester Stania in Auschwitz and Belsen who herself carried out selections; No. 46 is called Kopper who worked in the same Kommando as I did.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: Would it not be better for the witness to amplify this later.

COL. BACKHOUSE: Yes, she can tell us who they were when she is back in the box.

(The witness resumes her place in the witness stand)

COL. BACKHOUSE: Taking the persons you recognise, you have already told the court that you have seen Kramer, Hoessler and Klein taking part in selections. Are those the persons whom you have seen and recognise now? A. I was present.

Q The next person you recognised was No. 6, Borman. What have you seen Borman doing? A. I know that in 1943 when we were in block 15 at Auschwitz as kommandos, we were coming back from work in fives and one of the kommandos had a swollen leg and could not keep up with us, and Borman set her dog on her.

Q What type of dog was it? A. I am not well versed in dogs, but I think it was an Alsatian.

Q When she set the dog on this woman what happened to the woman? A. First she egged the dog on and it pulled at the woman's clothes; then she was not satisfied with that and made the dog go for her throat. I had to turn away then, and the woman Borman proudly pointed out her work to an Oberscharführer.

Q Did you see what injury the woman suffered from?

A I saw a stretcher being brought along and I should think she was just about alive, but only just.

MAJOR MUNRO: I object to that question as leading. I think the prosecutor has had his answer in connection with beating possibly by people in the dock. The witness was asked did she recognize anybody in the dock as having beaten prisoners and her answer was that the S.S. people were not in a position to beat, but it was the kommandos or kapos, and I suggest my friend is cross-examining his own witness now.

THE PRESIDENT: What is your point on that objection?

COL. BACKHOUSE: My point is this. That is not quite what the witness said. She first of all confined her answer as regards the beatings to beatings which took place when out on kommandos. She then said that some of these persons went out on kommandos. I then asked did she see any beatings in the camp, to which she said "Yes." I now ask: did any of the persons she sees here do any beatings in the camp?

THE PRESIDENT: You may put that question.

COL. BACKHOUSE: Did you see any person in the dock beating when in the camp? A. I have seen.

Q. Who have you seen? A. I have seen Kramer beat a person; I have seen how Boman set a dog on a person, and I have seen how Grese beat a person.

Q. Taking Kramer first. Have you seen him beat on one or on more than one occasion? A. I have seen that sort of thing so often that I cannot really say how many times I have seen Kramer do it.

Q. Are you certain that you have seen Kramer do it? A. I am certain.

Q. With regard to Grese, have you seen Grese do it once or more than once?

A. I have seen her do it in Auschwitz, and also about a fortnight before the British troops liberated Belsen I saw her beat a girl in the camp.

Q. What did she use for these beatings? A. She had a pistol, but she was using a stock.

THE PRESIDENT: A stock or the stock? A. Using a stock for beating purposes.

COL. BACKHOUSE: By "stock" what do you mean?

THE PRESIDENT: I am not clear what you mean by a stock. A. Well, I do not know what the stock was made of, but it was some sort of instrument, a riding crop.

COL. BACKHOUSE: Were the beatings light or severe? A. Very severe. If they were not the cause of death they were not called severe in the camp.

Q. Subsequently did you go to Belsen? A. On the 18th January I arrived at Belsen.

Q. Into which block were you put? A. In block 28.

Q. What were the conditions in that block? A. The conditions were so bad that it is impossible to find words in this world.

Q. What was your employment in Belsen? A. Might I describe the conditions?

Q. Certainly? A. In half a barrack there were 600 to 700 people. People were lying on the floor covered with lice and every other kind of vermin one can imagine. Our food depended very largely on the efforts of the senior of the block. If she was energetic we might get a quarter basin of soup at midday, if not we might get it at 3 o'clock. We received one bread for ten people every second week, and there was no bread for four weeks before the arrival of the British troops. During the whole time I was at Belsen people were not taken for baths, neither were their clothes changed. Towards morning there were several hundred corpses in

- Q. Did Bormann take any part in the selections you have spoken of? A. Yes, she was present many times, even with the dog.
- Q. How were the selections made? A. The selection was sometimes made in the shower room where we were parted from our jailers by wire. Selection was made in such a manner that people with blemishes, weak and ill people were chosen. Selections were really in fact a form of liquidation.
- Q. Were you clothed? A. No, we had to be naked. Selections took place also in the autumn and winter, when we had to stand in single file and wait our turn to enter the hut.
- Q. Did you ever see one of the crematoria yourself? A. I saw one through the barbed wire. I lived in block 2 and it was just the other side.
- Q. Did you say you had lived in block 25? A. When I passed from A to B I lived in block 25.
- Q. Did you ever see any persons taken to the crematorium? A. Not once; I saw it many times.
- Q. Could you hear any sounds from the building? A. I heard it quite often; from the hospital both by day and by night people were taken along to the crematorium.
- Q. What could you hear? A. Shouts and shrieks and anything one could hear from a person conscious of about to be put to death.
- Q. Did you ever see any of the persons who were taken into the crematorium come out alive again? A. There were cases of people who worked in the crematorium called sonderkommandos, they had the privilege when they came across a relation of saving them. Also karteimaessig, a person who had a father or a mother who was a christian.
- Q. Whilst you were at Auschwitz you have told us that you were beaten. You have shown the court the mark on your arm. Did you see any other people beaten there? A. It was on my arrival when I was beaten; it was just on my arrival. We all stood about and were beaten indiscriminately. After I got this wound of course I was off a bit; the wound was bound up but I took no further interest in what was going on around.
- Q. During the time that you remained at Auschwitz did you see any other persons beaten? A. I saw it very often. At first when I was working in kommando 103 and we were carrying loads of earth, of coal, and we could not manage it we were beaten severely.
- Q. Who did the beating? A. German women S.S., German S.S. and people who were prisoners.
- Q. Have you seen any of the persons who you have recognised today beating people? A. These people here were not in kommandos and had more important positions in the camp.
- Q. Have you seen any of the persons --- A. These people were in positions not in the kommando as witnesses, and it was the kommandos that did the beating.
- Q. Have you seen anybody beaten in the camp itself? A. Many people.
- Q. Have you seen girls beaten for hanging about talking? A. If we did not stand still during the appel, or if we talked on the main street we were beaten.
- Q. Have you seen any of the persons in the dock doing any beating in the camp?

the blocks and around the blocks and when the block was closed, when the lageroommandant or Grese came along to inspect the people, from the front of the blocks the corpses were cleared away, but inside they were full of corpses.

- Q. What employment had you in this camp, Belsen? A. I worked in the kitchen. I worked very hard from 3 o'clock in the morning till 9 o'clock at night in order to have a bed and a little more soup.
- Q. You have already pointed out to the court No. 16 (Karl Firsich) as the man in charge of your particular kitchen. Do you remember the day on which the camp was freed by British troops? A. Yes.
- Q. Do you remember something which happened that day before the British arrived? A. I remember that when the S.S. ran away the day before the arrival of the British and then when they returned the man I pointed out fired from the kitchen, where he was, killing several.
- Q. Who did he fire at? A. This was a women's camp, so he therefore fired mostly at the women through the window.
- Q. For what reason did he fire? Was there any reason you could see? A. There may be several reasons. It might have been a last chance of getting some revenge, or it might have been it was immaterial, as far as he was concerned what happened.
- Q. Was there anyone else with him when he was shooting? A. I was with him.

I asked him why he was doing it and he told me to mind my own business and not to be so arrogant.

- Q. Was he the only person firing? A. From the other half of the kitchen there was another cook who was firing.
- Q. About how many people were killed altogether? A. From the two kitchens certainly some 50 people.

COL. BACKHOUSE: That concludes my examination in chief.

(At 1705 hours the court is closed until 1000 hours tomorrow morning, 25th September 1945)